

PRESS RELEASE

To:

What: Severe Weather Awareness Week

When: February 20 – February 26, 2011

Where: West Central Texas

Contact: Steve Lyons at 325-944-9445 or Hector Guerrero at hector.guerrero@noaa.gov

**Governor Rick Perry has proclaimed February 20-through the 26th as
Severe Weather Awareness Week in Texas**

...Can You Receive a Tornado Warning...

Each year Texans are surprised by tornadoes or severe thunderstorms. It is vitally important to have more than one way to receive NWS warnings. You can receive NWS warnings from devices such as your cell phone, smart phone, PC, radio, television or NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards. Some communities, universities and private companies can text or e-mail NWS warnings to your cell phones or telephones. You could search the internet for these private companies and/or you may contact your university and/or local Emergency Management Office to see if they offer this service in your area.

NOAA All Hazards Radio functions like a smoke detector and warns you anywhere and anytime. This device will automatically alert you of tornadoes, flash floods and severe thunderstorms while you are asleep or away from your favorite radio or TV station, or internet site. You can buy one at most places that sell electronic devices.

TORNADO DRILL ENCOURAGED

The National Weather Service (NWS) in San Angelo encourages all residents and schools across West Central Texas to practice their tornado warning drill on Thursday, February 24th at 9:30 AM. The NWS in San Angelo will transmit a **Special Message** through the Emergency Alert System (EAS) on Thursday February 24th at 930 AM. Because of the nature of this message, it may or may not activate certain NOAA Weather Radios.

HELPFUL SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY LINKS

Feel free to use any of this information. Additional information is located at the following websites
www.srh.noaa.gov/sjt www.srh.noaa.gov/tadd www.redcross.org
http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/pages/weather_aware_severe.htm

Help us prepare our fellow citizens from the hazards associated with severe weather.

Please feel free to contact Steve Lyons at 325-944-9445 to set up an interview for your Newspaper, Radio or TV show. Your participation is extremely appreciated.

Hector Guerrero

Warning and Coordination Meteorologist

Steve Lyons

Meteorologist in Charge



Working Together To Save Lives



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECEIVING WARNINGS ON YOUR CELL PHONE: 20 SECONDS

SOME COMMUNITIES, UNIVERSITIES, AND PRIVATE COMPANIES CAN TEXT OR E-MAIL LIFE SAVING NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WARNINGS TO YOUR CELL PHONE OR TELEPHONE WHEN YOU NEED IT THE MOST. TO FIND THE PRIVATE COMPANIES THAT OFFER THIS SERVICE, YOU MAY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING PHRASE OR SOMETHING SIMILAR IN YOUR FAVORITE INTERNET SEARCH ENGINE: "FREE TEXT MESSAGING WEATHER ALERTS." PLEASE CONTACT YOUR UNIVERSITY OR LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE TO SEE IF THEY OFFER THIS SERVICE IN YOUR AREA.

TORNADO ALLEY: 20 SECONDS http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/pages/weather_aware_severe.htm

MORE TORNADOES STRIKE TEXAS THAN ANY OTHER STATE. IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN WARNINGS ARE ISSUED. IF YOU'RE AT HOME, GO TO YOUR STORM SHELTER OR BASEMENT. IF NEITHER IS AVAILABLE, GO TO THE LOWEST FLOOR AND SEEK A WINDOWLESS ROOM IN THE CENTER OF YOUR HOUSE LIKE A BATHROOM OR CLOSET. PROTECT YOUR HEAD WITH A PILLOW. IF YOU LIVE IN A MOBILE HOME, GO OUTSIDE AND LIE DOWN IN A DITCH OR LOW SPOT. COVER YOUR HEAD WITH YOUR ARMS.

WHEN LIGHTNING STRIKES: 20 SECONDS www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov

MORE AMERICANS ARE KILLED BY LIGHTNING THAN TORNADOES AND HURRICANES. ON AVERAGE, SIX PEOPLE DIE FROM LIGHTNING STRIKES IN TEXAS EVERY YEAR. IF YOU'RE CAUGHT OUTSIDE IN A THUNDERSTORM, GET DOWN FROM HILLTOPS AND AVOID OPEN FIELDS. IF YOU'RE AT THE BEACH OR IN A SWIMMING POOL GET OUT OF THE WATER. IT'S BEST TO GO INSIDE A BUILDING OR YOUR VEHICLE AS LAST RESORT BUT IF YOU MUST STAY OUTDOORS, KEEP AWAY FROM METAL OBJECTS AND TREES.

FLASH FLOOD SAFETY: 15 SECONDS www.floodsafety.noaa.gov

ALWAYS TURN AROUND DON'T DROWN (R) WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER A FLOODED LOW WATER CROSSING WHETHER ON FOOT OR IN A VEHICLE. MANY PEOPLE DROWN AT NIGHT WHEN IT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO SEE A FLOODED LOW WATER CROSSING. FLASH FLOOD RELATED DEATHS ARE THE NUMBER ONE STORM RELATED KILLER IN TEXAS AND THE NATION.

LIGHTNING SAFETY: 15 SECONDS

WATCH THE CLOUDS AND BE PREPARED TO TAKE SHELTER BEFORE YOU HEAR THUNDER OR SEE LIGHTNING. IF YOU'RE CAUGHT OUTSIDE IN LIGHTNING, YOUR HOME AND YOUR CAR OFFER'S A SAFER SHELTER. STAY OUT OF THE BATHTUB, STAY AWAY FROM WINDOWS AND ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES. TURN OFF ALL APPLIANCES PRIOR TO THE STORM. DON'T USE A CORDED TELEPHONE.

BASIC SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY RULES

A) Stay informed with NOAA ALL HAZARDS RADIO, cell phone, local Radio, TV, or the internet— Have more than one way to receive weather information in case you lose power. **NOAA All Hazards Radio** functions like a smoke detector and warns you anywhere and anytime. This device will automatically alert you of tornadoes, flash floods and severe thunderstorms while you are away from your favorite radio or TV station, cable channel or internet site. You can buy one at most electronic stores.

B) Know the difference between a watch and warning

Watch— means conditions are favorable for severe weather.

Warning- means that severe weather such as a tornado, hail or damaging wind storm is very likely or imminent, and has been detected on radar, has been reported by you (public), and/or has been identified by National Weather Service trained SKYWARN Storm Spotters.

C) Know the name of your county and those around you— Have a road map nearby your TV remote control or radio receiver.

D) Know what to do ahead of time.

Tornado and High Wind Safety----Always know the safe places from tornadoes and high winds and be sure your family knows, too. An underground shelter or above ground shelter are the safest places. However, the next safest place is an innermost windowless room or hallway on the lowest floor of your home, school, or business away from outside walls and windows. Get down low and cover your head with blankets, pillows, or mattresses. <http://www.nssa.cc/home.php>

Abandon Mobile Homes for a safer place from both tornadic and straight line winds, and know where to go when a Watch or Warning is issued for your area. Recent statistics prove that people in manufactured homes are at most risk from tornadoes. Approximately 8% of all US residents lived in mobile homes. From the period 1985-2002, *approximately 49% of all tornado deaths occurred in mobile homes. (American Meteorological Society)*